

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of purchasing ~~merchandise~~ a gift for a recipient, from a plurality of dealers on the same Internet site, comprising:

a step of accepting through Internet for one of said plurality of dealers an order ~~either for a simple purchase and delivery of merchandise, for the~~ of the type selected from the group consisting of a purchase of merchandise as a gift not accompanied by an option to select, or for and a purchase of and delivery of merchandise as a gift accompanied by an option to select;

a step of crediting a nomination fee to an account of said one of said plurality of dealers, said nomination fee comprising a portion of a purchase price of said gift ordered;

a step of making an unconditional delivery upon acceptance of an order ~~either for the simple purchase and delivery of merchandise or for the purchase and delivery of merchandise as a~~ of said gift not accompanied by an option to select, in which the necessary arrangements are made for the unconditional delivery of the ~~merchandise gift~~, as designated by the orderer, without granting the recipient an option to select and crediting said account of said one of said plurality of dealers with the remainder of said purchase price;

a step of granting through Internet the recipient an option to select upon acceptance of an order for the purchase ~~and delivery of merchandise as a~~ of said gift accompanied by an option to select, in which the designated recipient is informed of a content of the gift and is granted an option of selecting from a set of choices, including “take” and “credit”; and

a step of responding through Internet to a selection by the recipient, whereby if the recipient selects the “take,” the necessary arrangements are made to deliver to the recipient the ~~merchandise designated by the orderer as a gift~~ and crediting said account of said one of said plurality of dealers with a remainder of said purchase price; or if the recipient selects the “credit,” a credit is posted to the account of the recipient, in accordance with the purchase price of the merchandise designated by the orderer as a gift less said nomination fee; and

wherein the credit posted to the account of the recipient may be applied to all or part of the amount of ~~[[an]]~~ a future order from any of said plurality of dealers, ~~either of a type selected from the group consisting of for the simple a purchase and delivery of merchandise for~~

the recipient and [[or]] for [[the]] a purchase and delivery of merchandise as of a gift for another recipient not accompanied by an option to select and a service fee comprising a portion of said credit to an account of the recipient is deducted if the recipient uses said credit to purchase a gift for another recipient.

Claim 2 (cancelled).

Claim 3 (cancelled).

Claim 4 (cancelled).

Claim 5 (cancelled).

Claim 6 (cancelled).

Claim 7 (cancelled).

Claim 8 (cancelled).

Claim 9 (cancelled).

Claim 10 (cancelled).

Claim 11 (cancelled).

Claim 12 (cancelled).

Claim 13 (cancelled).

Claim 14 (cancelled).

Claim 15 (cancelled).

Claim 16 (cancelled).

Claim 17 (new): The method of purchasing a gift from a recipient according to Claim 1, further comprising the steps of operating, maintaining and managing a system for said method of purchasing a gift for a recipient by a broker wherein said broker receives a brokerage fee from each purchase comprising a portion of said purchase price of each gift.

Claim 18 (new): The method of purchasing a gift for a recipient according to Claim 17 wherein the maximum selling price of merchandise purchased by the recipient for the recipient for a gift for another recipient purchased by the recipient from said credit posted to the recipient's account is calculated from the equation as follows:

$$BC = \frac{CC \cdot \left(1 - \frac{x+y}{100}\right)}{1 - \frac{y}{100}}$$

wherein BC = the maximum selling price of the merchandise or gift, CC = the credit posted to the recipient's account, x = the nomination fee and y = the brokerage fee.

Claim 19 (new): The method of purchasing a gift for a recipient according to Claim 18 wherein if the selling price of the gift for the recipient (PR) is less than or equal to the maximum selling price of the merchandise of the gift (BC), the service fee is calculated from the equation as follows:

$$S c h = \frac{P R \cdot \frac{x}{100}}{1 - \frac{x + y}{100}}$$

wherein Sch = the service fee.

Claim 20 (new): The method of purchasing a gift for a recipient according to Claim 18 wherein if the maximum selling price (BC) is less than the selling price of the gift for the recipient (PR) which is in turn less than the credit to the recipient (C), the service fee (Sch) is calculated from the equation as follows:

$$S c h = \frac{P R \cdot \frac{x}{100}}{1 - \left( \frac{x}{100} \cdot \frac{C C - P R}{C C - B C} + \frac{y}{100} \right)}$$

Claim 21 (new): The method of purchasing a gift for a recipient according to Claim 18 wherein if the credit to the recipient's account (CC) is equal to or less than the selling price of the gift for the recipient (PR), then the service fee is calculated from the equation as follows:

$$S c h = \frac{C C \cdot \frac{x}{100}}{1 - \frac{y}{100}}$$